

ESCAPE FROM GLOBALISM

**MEDITATIONS WHILE
ROWING DOWN THE DANUBE**

E. Michael Jones



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Fidelity Press
206 Marquette Avenue
South Bend, Indiana 46617

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Cover: E. Michael Jones rowing on the Danube



To Paul und Ria Wentges

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Introduction

It is no coincidence that the fairy tale was invented by Germans. They have the castles, and they have two of the most scenic and romantic rivers in the world: the Rhine and the Danube. I used to live on the Rhine, downstream from the romantic part which begins (heading downstream) just below Mainz, flows past the Loreley, and ends as you arrive in Coblenz. And it was because I lived there that I had the opportunity through my friends Paul and Ria Wentges to row down an equally romantic stretch of the Danube, the river that once formed the northern boundary of the Roman empire and which remains the main artery of commerce in southeastern Europe.

But the fairy tale has more than a geographical meaning. The fairy tale is always about a world and a time which no longer exist because of some disruption of German history. The disruption that begat the fairy tale as we know it was Napoleon's conquest of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806. E.T.A. Hoffman was a Prussian bureaucrat at the time and the tales he wrote in the aftermath of that conquest set the tone for fairy tales ever since. We experience the nostalgia that Hoffman felt for the lost world of his childhood every year around Christmas when we watch our children perform in local versions of *The Nutcracker*, a ballet based on one of Hoffman's tales.

German history has been an exercise in nostalgia ever since. The German Romantics who were sick of Napoleon and the French Enlightenment idealized the lost world of the guilds and knights of the German Middle Ages. Wagner idealized the lost world of the Niebelungs. As a baby boomer, I grew up hating Bauhaus monstrosities like the Dreischeibenhaus in Duesseldorf and longing to walk through a German city before saturation bombing had rearranged them into the dreariness that characterized the 1950s. Then I got my chance to row through that lost world, past the baroque palace at Melk, past the Benedictine monasteries that brought civilization and Christianity to my barbarian ancestors.

German history is an exercise in nostalgia for times before: before Christianity, before Napoleon, before the industrial revolution ruined the landscape, before World War I, before the saturation bombing destroyed its cities in World War II, and so on. I rowed down the Danube in August of 2001, a period which is now behind another before: before the introduction of the Euro, when everything was purchased cheaply in local currencies; before 9/11 and the neoconservative takeover of American foreign policy, which

turned the Germans anti-American in a way that I had never experienced in my life. The fact that this book is a rant against globalism means that I can't say I didn't see it coming, but it also means that I can't not mourn it now that it's past.

E. Michael Jones
October 2012

Meditations While Rowing

Getting out of the center of Pittsburgh on a bicycle is a bit like the old description of being in the army: long periods of boredom followed by short bursts of terror. That dictum has to be modified in this instance to correspond to the terrain. The terror corresponds to riding downhill with a full load, wondering what's going to appear around that steep curve as you pick up speed at 32 feet per second watching the digital readout on your speedometer head toward 40. That terror is compounded by wondering about your brakes and things like culvert grates and potholes. It is compounded further by the abrupt switch in the sort of road you end up riding on. What starts out as a city street suddenly becomes the on ramp to a bridge with no shoulder, followed by the convergence of other on ramps full of cars bent on getting to the other side of the four or five lanes of highway in front of you (or behind you), and not particularly expecting someone on a bicycle to pop up in his field of vision. That means that the downhill portion of this trip has to be negotiated at automobile speeds over unfamiliar roads with directions being shouted back and forth over the traffic noise. What counts in the army as boredom corresponds to the uphill portion of the trip out of Pittsburgh, which in this instance means not so much boredom as unremitting, unrelenting physical exertion on roads that go up and up seemingly without end. Before long, it becomes apparent that this is not a landscape that was made for human beings, at least not human beings without automobiles surrounding them.

The point of all this was supposed to be relaxation, in particular a bike trip from Pittsburgh to Washington, DC along abandoned railroad lines newly converted to bike paths and along the C&O Canal tow path, which hasn't been converted to anything since the railroads made it obsolete. As I said, the purpose of a vacation is relaxation in some sense of the word. This didn't seem like relaxation in any sense of the word that I could understand, and so I consoled myself with the fact that the bike trip really didn't begin until we reached the ATA trail head in Boston, Pennsylvania. The fact that I might die a premature death before I got there wasn't consoling at all, nor was it relaxing, but it inspired hope in things to come, as yet unseen.

As I said, the bike trail we were seeking followed an abandoned rail line

along the Youghaheny River up into the mountains almost to the beginning of the C&O Canal trail in Cumberland, Maryland, which eventually takes you to Georgetown in Washington, DC. Since trains can't negotiate hills like cars, the idea of converting rail lines to bike trails isn't a bad idea, although making full use of the rail lines, including more passenger service, is an even better idea.

Once we reached the trail, the roller coaster ride out of Pittsburgh was over. Riding on the trail gives a welcome respite from the hills. It also allows you a respite from the average American road, which has become an assault on even the crudest sensibilities over the past 50 years. Riding on abandoned rail lines allows you to cross mountains on an incline so gradual that you hardly notice you're riding up hill. This particular trail was cut out of the south bank of the Youghaheny River. After beginning in Boston, you ride through the woods with the river to your left, past waterfalls, over trestles, then suddenly you notice that the river which used to be next to you is now 100 feet below. This becomes dramatically apparent when you cross the trestle into Ohio Pyle, one of the prettiest towns on the trip, and arrive at the town's quaint little train station. Towns like Ohio Pyle and Connellsville exist because of the railroad. Connellsville produced the coke that got shipped by rail to Pittsburgh to produce the steel that went into the nation's skyscrapers and bridges.

We spent the first night on the trail in one of Connellsville's bed and breakfasts, which was at one time one of Connellsville's mansions, owned by a lawyer who became wealthy representing the local robber barons. In the case of the lawyer and the rest of Connellsville, it was easy come easy go. Within the space of less than one hundred years this imposing brick mansion went from being the home of one of the town's most influential citizens to a flophouse to its present incarnation as a bed and breakfast run by a former long distance trucker and his garrulous wife. It was in many ways a symbol of the rapacious nature of development in America. Not only towns but whole infrastructures like the nation's rail system and its steel industry were built up almost overnight, exploiting both human and natural resources to the breaking point in the process, and then were cavalierly abandoned.

Going to church in Connellsville on Sunday means attending Mass at an Italian parish, alongside a group of people who had been lured out of their native place to work for an unjust wage in the coal mines of Pennsylvania for people who cared as much about their well-being as they cared about the

well-being of the streams their mines were polluting. Now this pool of Italian immigrants is left to go on living its life long after the industrial tide which brought them there washed out to other shores.

Towns like Ohio Pyle were abandoned when the train was abandoned in favor of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, around 20 miles to the north. The turnpike was originally intended to be another railroad, this time in competition with the Pennsylvania Railroad, until J.P. Morgan decided he didn't want the competition. The construction of that line then stopped abruptly even after three tunnels had been hacked through some of the highest mountains in its path. Eventually it became the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the first of its kind in the nation, and in many ways the model for the Interstate Highway system which would cover the nation 20 years later.

The bike trail, to get back to the bike trail, is called a trail because it is not paved. The exact details of its construction are not known to me, but at one point the rails and rocks and ties were removed and whatever was underneath them was covered by a layer of limestone dust. Just what got covered becomes apparent after a few miles on the trail. Pennsylvania is the home of trillions of rocks which got dumped there where the last glacier receded during the last ice age. Because Pennsylvania was the southernmost boundary of the glacier, it existed in a state of what the geologists called periglaciation, which meant frequent freezing and thawing, the combination of which shattered whatever stone formations existed there into uncountable numbers of rocks. All of those rocks are mixed with the mixture of clay, sand and rotting vegetation that is commonly known as dirt. Dirt, you may have noticed, dissolves readily in water, creating another substance known as mud. When the mud dries back into dirt it usually recedes a few inches from its previous level exposing the rocks that are always lurking near the surface in Pennsylvania. The application of packed limestone dust impedes this process somewhat, but only somewhat, which ensures that any ride along this trail means that bicycle tires will come in fairly constant contact with rocks. The western most portions of the C&O canal are in this respect infinitely worse. The trail which parallels what is left of the canal is simply two wagon ruts, each of which is composed of mud and rock.

Last year I did the trip all the way to Washington on a Dutch commuting bike, the kind the Dutch ride to work day after day in all kinds of weather, which in Holland means riding over asphalt bike paths in the rain. Taking no special precautions last year, I simply rode the bike until my rear tire gave out

about 10 miles west of Harpers Ferry, where after an unpleasant walk in the dark, my oldest son and I made it to the youth hostel, bought a new tire and tube the next day, and finished the ride over the final, limestone-dust surfaced segment of the trail. This year I decided to upgrade my equipment, which meant that I got three flats within the first 40 miles on the trail and didn't finish at all.

Bill Bryson had similar experiences, not on the C&O Canal but on the Appalachian Trail, a much more ambitious venture, stretching 2000 miles from Georgia to Maine. That's over five million steps if you do the whole thing. Like me, he didn't finish, but in the million or so steps he did take he had plenty of time to think about what the trail had to say about America and its attitude toward "nature." Bryson has nothing nice to say about Pennsylvania. In addition to all of the ankle-twisting rocks left there when the last glaciers left, Pennsylvania has the country's meanest rattlesnakes, least reliable water sources, and least reliable maps of any state on the trail. The trail also bypasses the only really beautiful mountains in the eastern part of the state in favor of "wilderness," which from the walker's point of view means an unbroken canopy of trees. The only thing memorable about the Appalachian Trail in Pennsylvania is the Delaware Water Gap, now spanned by an interstate bridge hustling millions of cars back and forth between Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

It could have been worse. During the '60s the Army Corps of Engineers decided to "tame" the Delaware River by building a dam across the gorge that is the Delaware Water Gap. In order to do this, they first had to drive all of the small farmers who lived along the river off their farms. This took a few years. I remember seeing the farmhouses targeted for destruction when I visited there in the late '60s. During that period of time, it became clear to the engineers that the foundation upon which they were planning to build that dam, which would create a 40 mile long lake behind it, was the same unstable mixture of rock and mud that characterized the rest of Pennsylvania, the legacy of the last ice age. That meant of course that once the Delaware River finally filled up the space behind the dam, the dam might simply give way sending the contents of that 40 mile long lake hurtling toward Trenton, Philadelphia, Chester, and Wilmington in a wall of water that would have made the Johnstown Flood look like a calm day at the beach.

Once the dangers became apparent, work on the dam stopped, but not before the people who once lived there had been driven from their land.

Instead of seeing the human tragedy here, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the group which maintains the Appalachian Trail saw the silver lining in the cloud. All of those bulldozed farms and homes now provided the Appalachian Trail with a "protected corridor." The phrase "protected corridor," used to describe the destruction of what was human habitat in this spectacular region, allows Bryson to indulge in an extended peroration on the American idea of "nature." "To tell you the truth," he writes:

I was getting a little wearied of this. I know the Appalachian Trail is supposed to be a wilderness experience, and I accept that there are countless places where it would be a tragedy for it to be otherwise, but sometimes, as here, the ATC seems to be positively phobic about human contact. Personally, I would have been pleased to be walking through hamlets and past farms rather than through some silent "protected corridor."

Bryson had just made contact with "America's attitude toward nature," something he finds "very strange," primarily because he had lived in England for a number of years, and during that period of time he had the opportunity to take walking tours both there and on the continent, in particular in Luxembourg, which he found "wonderful because the whole charmingly diminutive package was seamlessly and effortlessly integrated." Which is another way of saying that, in Europe, man and nature are not two mutually exclusive propositions, which is what they have become in America.

The simple fact of the matter is that America has never possessed a consistent idea of development because it has never possessed a consistent idea of what "nature" is or how man fits into that picture. Most of the people who have anything sensible to say about American intellectual history trace this defect to the distorted idea of original sin which has haunted this country from its inception. John Calvin, a French lawyer who became infected with the Lutheran heresy as a young man, tried to organize the Protestant faith in his *Institutes*, something which proved to be a hopeless task, given the faulty principles it was based on. One of those faulty principles was his exaggerated notion of original sin. Calvin felt that man had ceased being what we would call human, which is to say a rational creature capable of choosing the good as his final end, because of the fall. He was like Pap in *Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain's version of the natural man, or someone who was "all mud." Grace, according to this system, is not something that perfects nature, as Aquinas would have it. Grace repudiates nature by giving man a new nature.

And so it was with Pap when he got religion and was taken in by the judge. "This here hand was the hand of a hog," he tells the judge after his conversion, giving some indication that he wasn't quite human until he got religion and not quite human after he got religion either. Promoted from beast to angel, the surest thing in Pap's life was the fact that he had no secure ontological status in nature. This is precisely what Jonathan Edwards meant when he said that unconverted man had "nothing to stand on." Man was a loathsome spider dangling over the fires of perdition, and the only thing that prevented his immediate destruction was the gossamer-thin wisp of God's grace with no nature to sustain it.

All of that changed dramatically when the Enlightenment came to New England and Congregationalism decayed with a sort of isotopic precision into Unitarianism and the idea of original sin decayed along with it. Emerson, the Unitarian minister who found that etiolated creed too restrictive, restored man to his place in nature by abandoning the idea of original sin altogether and putting Pantheism in its place. Now man was once again at home in "nature," because he had ceased once again being a human being. He was now god, along with everything else.

What both Calvinism and the Transcendentalist repudiation of Calvinism have in common is the belief that human beings are both different from and compatible with "nature." Both reject the notion that grace perfects nature, either because nature cannot be perfected or because nature has no need of grace. America would oscillate between these two poles. The National Park Service would implement both ideas simultaneously. Bryson talks about hiking along Skyline Drive in Virginia, where the Appalachian Trail, which aspires to make life as difficult as possible, runs for miles yards away from a highway which aims to ruin the very natural beauty one comes there to see by making it accessible to the maximum number of automobiles with all of the accumulation of parking lot and junk food emporia one has come to associate with that kind of road. Either way, this notion of man as somehow not part of creation would cause problems in terms of development. After hiking along a trail only feet away from speeding cars which did its best to give the impression it was wilderness, Bryson tried to formulate the schizophrenic American attitude toward "nature" that had culminated in such catastrophically bad development:

In America, alas, beauty has become something you drive to, and nature an either/or proposition — either you ruthlessly subjugate it, as at

Tocks Dam and a million other places, or you deify it, treat it as something holy and remote, a thing apart, as along the Appalachian Trail. Seldom would it occur to anyone on their side that people and nature could coexist to their mutual benefit — that, say, a more graceful bridge across the Delaware might actually set off the grandeur around it, or that the AT might be more interesting and rewarding if it wasn't all wilderness, if from time to time it purposely took you past grazing cows and tilled fields.

I would have much preferred it if the AT guidebooks had said: "Thanks to the Conference's efforts, farming has been restored to the Delaware River Valley, and the footpath rerouted to incorporate sixteen miles of riverside walking because, let's face it, you get too much of trees sometimes."

Something like the opposite of that thought started running through my mind shortly after we cast off from the slip in Obernzell in the rowing barge Niederbayern (complete with blue and white oars) for a 200 plus kilometer rowing trip down the Danube river from just downstream from Passau at the Austrian border to just upstream from Vienna. Needless to say, this was not wilderness rafting. The Danube is a river that has been in commercial use since classical antiquity, and some would say from prehistoric times as well. The Nieblungs sailed (or rowed) down the Danube at the time of the *Voelkerwanderung*. Some people even say that the Achaeans, the ancient Greeks, sailed down the Danube from their ancestral home at the confluence of the Ruhr and Rhine rivers in what is now Germany, and, armed with iron weapons and armor, conquered the original inhabitants of Greece at around the first millennium before Christ and began what has come to be known as Western Civilization after they left the Danube at the plains of Hungary and headed south by foot.

In spite of its history (or perhaps because of it) there are long stretches of the Danube where the mountains on both sides of the river are covered by stretches of forest broken only here and there by abandoned castles on the hilltops. One thousand years of civilization has not destroyed the forests along the Danube, primarily because the people who brought civilization here understood the correct relationship between nature and grace. If there ever were empirical proof that grace perfects nature, it can be seen in a wine-producing region like the Wachau in Austria. Civilization arrived here a long time ago, and when it arrived it was not in the mind of some raving English

religious fanatic. Roughly 500 years after St. Benedict founded the first monastery at Monte Cassino in Italy, which is to say at around the time of the first millennium after Christ, Benedictine monks began founding monasteries along the Danube River, places like Stift Melk and Kloster Gottweig. What you see as you row down the swift current of the Danube is a landscape permeated by 1,000 years of deeply rooted Christian culture. Ted Turner once said that his goal in life was to cut back the world's population to 2 billion so that everyone could own two cars. Could anyone but an American have made a statement this fatuous? There are groups of people — some of whom benefit from Mr. Turner's financial largesse — whose goal in life is to return America to the state of wilderness which, in their view, greeted the first Asians who tramped across the land bridge that used to be the Bering Straits thousands of years ago. The project is not only utopian and stupid, it bespeaks the self-loathing of people who are deeply involved in sexual sins against nature. Sins against nature invariably lead to the deification of nature. Abortion and animal rights are two sides of the same coin.

What the monks had in mind was something different. You can get a sense of what they had in mind if you stand on the parapet of Kloster Gottweig or Maria Tafel and look out over the orderly alternation of town and vineyard and fruit orchard all the way to the Danube. The monks, whose motto was *ora et labora*, established this pattern 1,000 years ago, and it has persisted to this very day. How's that for sustainable development?

Austria resisted revolution of the religious sort in the 17th century and the political sort in the early 19th Century. The Congress of Vienna bequeathed Europe unprecedented peace and prosperity for 100 years, and no country benefited more spectacularly from this peace than Austria, which resisted religious revolution more successfully than Germany, who was torn apart by the 30 years war, and much more successfully than England, who took the wealth which it had plundered from its monasteries and turned it into the engine of cultural subversion that would eventually be known as capitalism, the engine which found its home away from home in America.

Austria is the model for Gondor in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, and the final battle between Mordor and Minas Tirith is a conflation of the Turks marching on Vienna and the Luftwaffe dropping bombs on England during World War II. Austria has been a bulwark against revolution and the crackpot schemes of religious revolutionaries of the Anglophile sort, which is why Woodrow Wilson hated Austria and saw to it that it was chopped up into

little unstable pieces after World War I, pieces which were so unstable that they all but guaranteed the return of war 20 years later.

So there are now two prime paradigms for development in the world. The Austrian/Catholic/Benedictine paradigm and the American/Protestant/Dualist paradigm, which sees man and nature as mutually exclusive possibilities. As anyone who has taken a serious look at American cities and suburbs or the ravings of Zero Population Growth and their environmentalist fellow travelers can attest, the second possibility is doomed to failure. It was flawed from the beginning by being based on Calvin's misunderstanding of the relationship between grace and nature and compounded by the ruthless nature of the ruling elite which implemented these bad ideas in things like the Interstate Highway Bill after World War II.

Shortly after returning to the states after the cruise down the Danube, I learned that Gray Davis, then governor of California, announced that he was dedicating what would be the last stretch of freeway ever to be built in the state of California. Realizing that the car and the highway simply make things worse, California is now getting back to rail as the solution to its problems, less than one hundred years after they participated in the destruction of rail transportation in Los Angeles, a city no matter what it looks like now, that was built around rail lines. Transportation policy in California has undergone two 180 degree turns in less than 100 years — the deliberate destruction of light passenger rail to make way for the freeways and now the abandonment of the freeways and a return to passenger rail. In between turn a and turn b, the government has wasted trillions of dollars and committed itself to a system which will waste further billions simply maintaining the mistakes of the past.

Needless to say, the world can't afford to throw money away at this pace. Not even California can afford this. And the world, let there be no mistake, is destined to become developed. That's part of the promise made to Adam in Genesis. The only question is how it will be developed. As things stand now, it looks as if Skyline Drive in Virginia will continue to be the paradigm for development (or non-development) in the United States. That means that the country will simultaneously pursue policies that will destroy the landscape to accommodate the automobile and all of the development — fast food restaurants, parking lots, etc. — that go with it while simultaneously promoting "wilderness" in areas the automobiles have not destroyed. Africa is a good example of how at least half of the paradigm is being implemented

by conservationist groups. The native population is driven off the land to make way for animals, like elephants, who reproduce unchecked and threaten to deforest the very land they are supposed to keep pristine. The native population is then given the illusion that it can continue a hunter-gatherer existence indefinitely, which is of course impossible, resulting instead in large segments of the population moving into suburban/work camp/slums where they succumb to alcohol and sex and all of the other ills which befall a deracinated peasantry when it ends up in the cities. The source of this colossal mismanagement of human and natural resources is the inchoate assertion, once again, that human beings are not a part of nature. All development is bad. The solution is condoms and population control so that the elephants can live in peace, until, of course, it becomes clear that elephants can't live in peace without predators, at which point the same people who got this ball rolling recommend contraceptives for the elephants too.

People who think this way would do well to row down the Danube River and contemplate the effect that 1,000 years of deeply rooted Christian culture have had on a region like the Wachau. Successful development means development that accommodates human beings. If you fly home from Europe in the summer you get to see a lot of the earth. You get to see Greenland and realize that it is not green. From Greenland you then fly over Labrador and for hours you see land where there is not one single road or town. All of that is destined to be settled some day in some way or other, the only question is how, according to which paradigm.

There are more Benedictine Monks living at Kloster Gottweig now than during the late Middle Ages, but unfortunately none of them can compete with Ted Turner in terms of influencing the public mind about things like sex and "nature." In fact it is probably not an exaggeration to say that many monks have been more influenced by CNN than the rule of St. Benedict. Thomas Merton, to give one example from the life of the world's most famous living monk at the time, played Bob Dylan records for Jacques Maritain when that worthy visited him in the wilds of Kentucky, and he did so when New Hope, the next town on the other side of the monastery, didn't have electricity.

The first thing I see when I arrive in Salzburg is a bus with a poster covering both sides announcing that "Austria needs more freedom." Now, as an American, I have learned that whenever I see the word freedom, I

instinctively reach to see if my wallet is still in my back pocket. Freedom, in the American sense of the word, means the ability of the ruthless to exploit the naive. In this instance, the lessons about what "freedom" means, which I had learned in the expensive school of experience, proved to be prophetic, because the placard about Austrian's needing freedom was really about — you guessed it — some media magnate promoting private television in the only country in Western Europe which has been so far spared its ravages. The CDU in Germany, taking English ideology at face value, felt that "competition" would make things better and, as a result, introduced private TV there hoping to provide an alternative to the left-wing propaganda of the state subsidized stations. What they got was globalist junk culture at its worst — four channels devoted to round-the-clock shopping, four to pornography, and four to music — which is to say to MTV-oriented shows — all of which was calculated to uproot whatever was left of the German cultural patrimony and substitute the most ruthless form of economic, political and sexual manipulation in its place.

In many ways, the MTV channels are the most culturally pernicious, something that Americans were waking up to when I arrived back home. Perhaps because school was beginning, a spate of teen fashion articles appeared in newspapers across the country, bemoaning the sexualization of teenagers through MTV-inspired clothing. What began as the clothing-inspired sexualization of teenagers has now progressed to the clothing-inspired sexualization of pre-teens. "The skimpy, sexy nature of fashions for young girls is a hot topic these days," I read in the local paper upon my return. "As parents scouring stores for back-to-school clothing encounter the MTV-influenced styles: halter tops, low-rise pants and lots of glitter." No one states the case this baldly in these articles but anyone with a modicum of cultural savvy can see that parents who allow their children to watch TV, specifically MTV, will soon find that their children absorbed into a seamless net of cultural subversion, according to which "young shoppers influenced by Britney Spears videos" will pester their parents to buy "the latest trends for girls — including hip-huggers — "as 'interpreted' by chains like Target" for "Target customers."

Ted Turner culture promotes the sexualization of children because sexualization is the first step in exercising its control over them. A sexualized child is one who does not listen to his parents, who in turn are unable to convey messages of moral self-restraint, religious piety or ethnic solidarity to

their children. The sexualized child is remade as an appetite which makes incessant demands, an appetite which is other-directed, which is to say, a person with no internalized sense of moral absolute or sense of the transcendent purpose in life. Freedom, according to this system, which is now the system intended for the entire world, means gratification of appetite, and the parents who are stupid enough to allow the Ted Turners of the world access to their children soon realize that Ted Turner uses their children to order them around, ordering them, for example, to Target to spend money on Britney Spears-inspired fashions.

Ted Turner culture, as mediated through things like MTV, has as its goal turning every child into a sort of cultural commissar who will police the actions of his or her fellow students and, more importantly, his or her parents to make sure that they conform to the dictates of "fashion," which is to say media-generated forms of thought and behavior control. Music and fashion go hand and hand in this regard in the formation of pseudo-ethnic groups based on consumption of one item or another which confers group identity and belonging on the person who buys it. The Harley-Davidson culture, as codified by the music of someone like Travis Tritt, is just one obvious example of what I'm talking about. Britney Spears-Pepsi-NASCAR racing is another. Hip-Hop, which is now huge in Germany, is another. By conforming to MTV's race-inspired paradigms, the school-age generation of Germans can now prove that Hitler was wrong (or right) and show that they can have their cake and eat it too by their rebellion against German culture and docility in accepting the deracinated Ted Turner culture which seeks to replace it.

The sexualization of children through MTV-inspired fashion is the crucial link in this cultural transformation. Music and fashion are inextricably bound up with each other, and the options are roughly bipolar: either internationalist globalist music industry-inspired subjugation to "fashion" or ethnic dress and ethnic music rooted in local culture.

My crewmates on the rowing trip were, with the exception of my wife, all German and for the most part oblivious to the forces that were ceaselessly grinding away at their cultural patrimony. While in Regensburg, my wife bought a *Dirndlkleid*, partially because Air France had lost our luggage, partially as protest against globalism, and partially because the style of the dress is intrinsically attractive. When I suggest a return to ethnic clothing, the Germans roll their eyes. This is at least in part attributable to the fact that they come from northern Germany and couldn't tell you what the local *Tracht*

(ethnic clothing) was even if you put a gun to their heads. Bavaria and Austria, in this regard, have been more successful in preserving their cultural patrimony. Bavarians, as a result, used to be the butt of all sorts of jokes told by other more deracinated Germans, until it became apparent that Bavaria in general and Munich in particular jumped onto the computer bandwagon at just the right time and became as a result the most prosperous region of the country. The connection between local culture and prosperity is a counterintuitive thing for most Germans, who now seem as avid to globalize (or cannibalize) their own economy as certain segments of the American population. The *Dirndlkleid* has been preserved and modified over the years (modernized, if you will) to the point where you can still buy it. In Munich, in fact, you can buy *haute couture Dirndlkleider*.

Felix ten Hompel ran a women's clothing store in Rees, and, almost 30 years ago, I taught his daughter Barbara. Somewhere or other I have a picture of Barbara, standing on the wall which separates Rees, the town, from the meadow where the cows are grazing. She is wearing what was the uniform of the day: calf-high leather boots, blue jeans rolled up over the boots, an Afghan sheepskin coat and doubtless a turtleneck underneath. She probably bought the clothes at her father's store, after watching whomever it was who wore them on TV — Suzy Quattro or some by now forgotten icon of the times. Or, maybe she got the idea from watching me, since I played in a band and wore blue jeans and sang blue jeans music. When I suggest to Felix that he could have made more money selling *Dirndlkleider* to his daughters' generation, he shrugs and says no one would have bought them. Which is probably true. But what he's really saying is that he was powerless to affect the way his daughter's generation dressed because he, quite simply, could not compete with the music industry and all of the other agents of savage capitalism bent on telling people how to live their lives for the benefit of Ted Turner and his minions. The question is not whether we are going to wear clothes, but who will determine what clothes we are going to wear and the behavior that goes with them.

The pope, I am told, is planning to do a video with Britney Spears. This may be an urban legend, or it may be that Britney Spears is planning to release a CD in which she reads excerpts from Polish phenomenology of the Lublin school. Whatever. It can't be any worse than the German bishops' capitulation to the cultural forces determined to destroy the Catholic Church there. After attending Mass in Duesseldorf, my wife picked up a pamphlet in

the back of the church announcing (in English, of course) that "God is a DJ." The phrase is taken from a pop song making the rounds in the German-speaking world, probably over MTV sung by girls wearing hip-huggers, which will soon be "interpreted" for Target customers. The purpose of the pamphlet is to encourage the Catholic youth of Duesseldorf to take part in "Workshops," pronounced "Verkshops," where they can beat on drums — "sich einfach mal alles von der Seele trommeln," the pamphlet explains inexplicably lapsing into German — or write the lyrics for rap music ("Hier werden Raps getextet und vertont.") or put the Psalms into a rap music setting, or engage in simple improvisation whereby these unfortunate young people can "discover what's lurking inside you and then try it out on other people." It's hard to imagine a cultural program better calculated to drive out the last remnants of the Catholic faith from a generation that is already besotted by MTV and all of the other agents of cultural subversion, but here it is: "God is a DJ," sponsored by the Katholische Jugendamt Duesseldorf.

After confronting an attempt at enculturation this stupid, the only consolation available to us is from eternity or the past. Since eternity from our point of view is reserved for the future, we can console ourselves best by looking at the past, slowly, while drifting down the Danube, considering the fact that the Baroque was one of the most successful cultural counter-revolutions in the history of the past 2,000 years. During the period between the Council of Trent and the Congress of Vienna, Austria re-invented itself in a dazzling display of cultural self-confidence that is still evident today in that country's architecture and in its churches in particular. Once the Catholic Church gets over its misguided idea that it has nothing to fear from the media, it might once again find itself in a position to influence the culture on its terms. That sort of renaissance is still possible, at least theoretically, today. In fact, the entire Ted Turner globalist culture is based on an extremely fragile foundation: the motion in your wrist that turns on your television.

Biographical Note

E. Michael Jones, Ph.D., editor of [Culture Wars](#) magazine, is the author of more than twenty books, some of which are available for Kindle, including:

[Abu Ghraib and The American Empire](#)

[Benedict's Rule: The Rise of Ethnicity and the Fall of Rome](#)

[Jewish Nazis](#)

[L'affaire Williamson: The Catholic Church and Holocaust Denial](#)

[Lejzor and Fiszels Sing the Blues: Chess Records and the Black-Jewish Alliance](#)

[The Logos of Architecture and Its Opponents](#)

[Niggas in Denial: Pimping the System and The System of Pimping](#)

[Requiem for a Whale Rider](#)

[Travels with Harley in Search of America: Motorcycles, War, Deracination, Consumer Identity](#)

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